four hundred dollars required to buy an adopted daughter is relatively cheap insurance. There are also professional dealers in such urban areas as Taipei who buy girls of twelve or thirteen years of age and then sell them to wine houses or brothels. Such transactions often require registering the girl as an adopted daughter in order to conceal the true reason for her change of residence. Li Teng-Yu reported in 1943 that of the 162 girls working in three brothels in Taipei, 139 were registered as adopted daughters.[2] The result has been that the lông-lù form of adoption has become so suspect that many people will not consider giving a daughter in adoption to a family who does not intend to marry the girl to one of their own sons. According to a stereotype popular in Hsiachichou, it is only the very poor who will give a daughter in adoption as a lông-lù because they are the only people who care about the small difference in the amount of bride price, but like most stereotypes this one is misleading. The correlation between wealth and the likelihood of a family's giving a daughter in adoption as a lông-lù is primarily a result of the fact that the wealthy are more concerned about face. When they are reasonably sure that the girl is not to be sold into prostitution, a poor family will give a daughter in adoption as a lông-lù. Having little face, they have little to lose. A wealthy family, on the other hand, will not consider such an adoption regardless of the circumstances. Having face, they must be concerned to keep it untarnished.

The adoption of cē-bô-kàn was never very common in the village of Hsiachichou. In the years before World War II the villagers were too

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2 Li Teng-yu, "sīm-pûà to lông-lù" (sīm-pûà and lông-lù), Minzoku Taiwan, Vol. 4, No. 11 (1943), p. 17.

583 554 hand-drawn carts, the contents laid out on sheets of red paper for all to see. The children of the bride's family often spend an entire morning pinning ten dollar bills onto the sheets of red paper to make the usual gift of a thousand dollars cash as impressive as possible. Such a colorful procession naturally collects crowds of curious housewives all along its route, and their shrewd estimates often serve to fix the family's social standing for years to come. As a result, few families attempt to economize on a dowry, if not for their daughter's sake, then at least for their own sake.

593 562 942 We might therefore say that while male children are valued as heirs and descendants, female children are regarded as something on which one stands to lose either money or face. Parents and grandparents may be as personally fond of their female children as they are of their male children, but it is simply not sensible for them to raise a number of their own daughters. If a family is going to raise any female children at all, it is better for them to adopt sīm-pûa than to raise their own daughters. A sīm-pûa can marry a son of the family and bear children who will belong to the family, while a daughter is forbidden by the incest taboo from ever playing such a role. She can only remain a member of her natal family by making a matrilocal marriage, and such marriages are pointless if a family has sons of their own. A wealthy family can, of course, choose to raise both their sons and daughters, but in the years before 1930 people in Hsiachichou were too poor for such luxuries. The cost of raising a daughter might make it difficult for a family to provide for their male children, and it would be

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impossible for the family which wanted to adopt girls as wives for their sons. Thus, we find in Hsiachichou in the years before 1930 a rate of adoption for female children that is much higher than the rate of male adoption. Whereas only 8 (7 percent) of the 110 males born in the village before 1930 were given in adoption, more than half of the females born in this period were sent out in adoption. Of a total 103 girls born into the village before 1930 we find that 67 (65 percent) were given in adoption. As striking as this figure may seem, the rate of adoption was apparently even higher in Hsiachichou in the past. Of 45 girls who were born before 1910 a total of 32 (71 percent) were given out in adoption.[1]

According to our informants in Hsiachichou, landlord families living in the market towns almost never gave their female children away in adoption. They were wealthy enough that the expense of raising a girl was not a matter of concern, and so were able to spare their female children the often unhappy fate of the adopted daughter. Some parents who were particularly fond of a daughter even went so far as to arrange a matrilocal marriage as a means of keeping her in the family. By contrast with these exceptionally well to do families, there have always been some poor families living in the area who have had to sell all of their daughters. These were the really impoverished who could not afford to raise their sons let alone their daughters. The contrast is one to which a friend living in Hsulin often referred to illustrate

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1 These figures and those which follow exclude the female children of a number of women who were prostitutes. Since the circumstances are so different from the case of the normal family, we will analyze these decisions separately.

what he considered the inordinate importance of material wealth in Chinese society. "Whether or not a girl is going to become an adopted daughter," he would argue, "depends entirely upon whether she is born into a rich family or a poor family. If her father is a landlord who eats his rice out of the middle of the pan, then there is no chance of her being given away in adoption; but if her family is poor and eats nothing but sweet potatoes, then she will almost certainly end up as an adopted daughter. A persons fate here depends entirely on how much money he has. As people say, 'Even the ghosts move stones for the wealthy.'"

As applied to a female child's chances of being given out in adoption, this argument contains a good deal of truth. Very wealthy families seldom give their female children in adoption, and the very poor usually had no choice but to give away their female children. On the other hand, the illustration is also exaggerated, for the fate of most female children was not a simple function of the income of their natal families. This was true only for those girls born to the very wealthy or the very poor. In a community such as Hsiachichou the wealthiest family was poor as compared with the landlords living in the market town, and only a few families were so impoverished as to have to sell their male children. Here a family's decision about raising a female child depended more upon their needs for the girl than upon their financial ability. The wealthiest family in the village was not so affluent as to be able to raise several daughters if they did not have need for them, and few families were so poor as to have to give

the conditions of the decision were so clear as to make mistaken judgements unlikely.

One might assume that a mother would be particularly reluctant to give away her first born child and a grandparent his first born grandchild, and yet even first born daughters were given away if they did not have value in terms of the family's larger needs. For reasons which we will dicuss later, many women in Hsiachichou adopted a daughter during the early years of marriage, and when they did they were just as likely to give away the first child born to them as they were the second. We find six cases in which a first born child is a girl who was born into a family with an adopted daughter, and in only one case do we find that the family did not give the child out as an adopted daughter. The fact that a female child might have had a special emotional significance as a first born child did not save her from being given in adoption if she did not have value to the family as domestic labor or as a means of bringing a son-in-law into the family. The general goals of the kê apparently always took precedence over the personal concerns of any of its members.

We have seen above that the likelihood of a female child's being given in adoption was not primarily a function of her family's financial ability, suggesting that this was a result of the relatively little variation in the income of village families. The wealthiest families in the village could not be unconcerned about raising a child for whom they had no use, and all but the very poorest families could manage to raise a daughter if she was needed. Nonetheless, there was some

656 some variation in the financial capacities of village families, and much
597 variation as did exist accounts for the fact that a few families gave
562 away an only daughter while a few kept more than one daughter. Seven
182 of those 9 families who kept more than one female child seem to have been among the wealthiest families in the village at that time, and such information as we have seems to indicate that all but one of the eight families who gave away an only daughter were among the poorest families in the village. We know that in two cases the head of the family had been unemployed for some time when the girl was born, and in another case the family was so poor that they later had to sell one of their male children. It is also interesting to note that 8 of those 9 families who kept more than one daughter also gave away at least one of their later born female children. While they may have been somewhat better off than most of their neighbors, they were not so affluent as to be able to raise all their female children.

597 The decision of eight families to give away an only female child
562 was probably also influenced by the position of these children in their
593 generation of the family. We know the sibling order of the fathers of six of these eight children, and in five of these six cases the father was a later born son. It therefore seems likely that these children were given away because the grandparents did not see any point in keeping so many granddaughters. Their older son's daughters provided the family with all the female labor needed, and from the grandparent's point of view the older son's children assured the continuity of the family line. There is also one other kind of consideration which may have influenced the decisions of several families who opted to keep mi

more than one of their female children. We know that in three of these nine cases several children in the family had died shortly before the second daughter was born. Since families in which children have recently died often see the birth of their next child as a sign of a change in their fortunes, it is possible that these three girls were kept because of their significance in terms of the family's previous losses. At least this was suggested to us by the mother of one of these girls who told us that her family had decided not to give away the second girl "because we had been having such bad luck with our children. Three of them died before she was born, and we were so glad that she didn't die that we couldn't give her away."

As we have already mentioned in describing the various forms of marriage and adoption in Hsiachichou, the sǐm-pû form of adoption is generally viewed as more prestigeful than the lông-lù form of adoption. Several village women said that they didn't like the idea of giving a child away as a lông-lù "because people would talk about it." The compensating advantage of a lông-lù adoption is that the bride price is usually somewhat larger than in the case of a sǐm-pû adoption. The bride price for a sǐm-pû is a nominal seventy or eighty dollars, but a family can often ask as much as five or six hundred dollars for a lông-lù. We might therefore expect to find some relationship between a family's income and the likelihood of their giving out their daughters as lông-lù or sǐm-pû. Having money and the status which money creates, wealthy families should be less concerned about the size of the bride price and more concerned about face. As a result, they should be more likely to

#599 give their daughters out as sîm-pûa. The villagers themselves assume
• 556 that such a correlation exists, but the limited data that we have do not seem to corroborate their assumption. The few cases for which we have all of the necessary information include several families who gave one daughter out as a sîm-pûa and sold another as a lông-lù. The choice between the two forms of adoption does not seem to have been a very significant one for these families, and so perhaps here again relative wealth is only an important factor when one compares the very wealthy and the very poor.

#599 We are thus able to draw a relatively simple picture of decisions
#562 concerning adoption in the years before 1930. Whether or not any par-
#121 ticular child was given away in adoption depended primarily upon the child's sex and the composition of the family in which he was born. The prime concern of any family in making decisions about their membership was to have descendants who could care for the adult members of the family in their old age and provide for the continuation of the family into the next generation. A child who was born into an as yet childless family was thus almost never given away in adoption. Of 18 males and 14 females born into childless families only 1 (5 percent) of the males and 4 (22 percent) of the females were given out in adop-
[735] tion. But while every family was very much concerned to have heirs and descendants, all but a very few families were so poor that they
[611] could not easily afford to raise all of their offspring. The general
[582] preference for patrilineal descent and patrilocal marriage also created
[342] among all families a tendency to value their male children much more than their female children.

*597 1930 were sold as bīeng-līeng-kiá:, but we do not find a single case of
*562 the sale of a male child among those 144 boys born after 1930. The
*592 only cases of male adoption in Hsiachichou in the last thirty years
858 have been the two cases already mentioned in which a boy was trans-
198 ferred by his grandparents from one brother to another. Whatever other
182 changes have taken place in Hsiachichou in recent years, it is obvious
that the desire for an unbroken chain of male descendants has remained.

*597 In the last chapter we saw that the likelihood of any particular
*562 girl's being given away as an adopted daughter was not to any large
• 556 degree a function of the wealth of her natal family. Most families
178 in the village at that time were so poor that they could not reasonably
undertake the responsibility of raising a female child if she was not
needed, and only a few families were so poor that they could not reason-
ably undertake the responsibility of raising at least one female
child if there was good reason for them to do so. The likelihood of a
girl's being given in adoption was thus a function of her value to her
natal family, and this was determined in large part by the composition
of the family into which she was born. The general poverty of the
village forced all families to seriously consider giving away their
female children, but it did not make any one family more or less likely
to give away their daughters than another family. In the language
of the experiment, wealth was a constant. But this is not the case
[833] in more recent years. As the general economy of Hsiachichou has changed
during the course of the last three or four decades, some families
have benefited from these changes more than others. In the early

decades of this century every family was more or less on a par. The only important difference between families was the amount of land owned, and none of them owned very much. In 1960 some families were still farmers with less than half an acre of land or coal miners earning only a few dollars a day, but others were working as technicians or petty bureaucrats or had managed to establish themselves in some kind of a business. As a result, we find that in recent years wealth has become an important factor in determining whether or not a family will decide to give away a child in adoption. Some families are still forced to give away many of their female children simply in order to raise their sons, while there are other families who can afford to raise their daughters without sacrificing other goals.

Since our information concerning the relative income of the various families living in Hsiachichou is not so detailed as to permit a direct comparison of individual families at different points in time, the extent of these changes can best be illustrated by comparing those two areas of the village known as Shangchou and Hsiachou, the former now containing more of the affluent citizens of Hsiachichou and the latter housing their less successful neighbors. The families originally living in Shangchou took advantage of the opportunities offered by the changing economy early, giving them an initial advantage over their neighbors in Hsiachou. More importantly, most of the better building sites in the village are located in Shangchou and those families who have improved their lot in recent years to the point that they could afford to build a new house have built it in Shangchou, leaving their

less fortunate neighbors as residents of the decaying Hsiachou. This imbalance of wealth between the two areas is reflected in the adoption rates. Of the 93 girls born into Hsiachou 32 (34 percent) were given out in adoption as compared with only 9 (14 percent) of the 66 girls born into Shangchou. Were our information detailed enough to permit a comparison of individual families, we would undoubtedly find that relative wealth is an even more important variable, but gross as it is, even this comparison clearly makes the point that her family's ability to raise her has become an important determinant of a girl's chance of remaining in her natal home.

We must therefore take into account two sets of factors rather than one in order to calculate the likelihood of a girl's being given in adoption in the post-1930 period. We must consider the composition of the family into which she was born, and we must also take into account the relative economic status of her natal family. When both sets of factors are considered a clear pattern of adoption emerges, with girls born into some situations being much more likely to become adopted daughters than girls born under other circumstances. The daughters of wealthy families who are born before the family has either sons or daughters are almost never given in adoption, and those born into families with both male and female children are only occasionally given in adoption. Of 39 girls born in Shangchou to families of the first type only 2 (5 percent) were given in adoption, and of 24 girls born into Shangchou families of the second type only 5 (21 percent) were given in adoption. The composition of the family into which a girl

is born is thus not an important variable among wealthy families, most of the families in Shangchou deciding to keep their female offspring regardless of the number and sex of their other children. In the case of the poorer village families living in Hsiachou, on the other hand, the composition of the family into which a girl is born does make a difference, the rate of adoption for girls born into some types of families being almost as high as in the years before 1930. We find that girls who are born into families which have both sons and daughters are much more likely to be given out in adoption than those born into childless families or families which have only sons or only daughters. Whereas only 6 (15 percent) of the 39 girls born into Hsiachou families who did not as yet have either male or female children were given in adoption, we find that 26 (48 percent) of those 54 girls born into families with both sons and daughters were given in adoption.

We are now in a position to answer some of the questions raised at the beginning of our last chapter. Whether or not a family living in Hsiachichou decides to give away one of their children depends primarily upon the child's value in terms of the family's economic and social needs. Males are less likely to be given away than females because of their importance as heirs and descendants, and girls born into childless families are less likely to be given away than those born into families with sons because of their potential utility to the family. The composition of the family is thus probably the most important single factor influencing decisions about adoption,

but there are also other factors which may make any given decision more or less likely. The generation which has the authority for making the decisions in the family determines the fate of many children, and the family's economic status determines the fate of a good many more. Children whose fates are decided by their parents are somewhat less likely to be given away than those whose fates are determined by their grandparents, and children born into poor families are somewhat more likely to be given in adoption than those born into wealthy families.

[553] [554] Moreover, the family which cannot really afford the expense of the preferred marriages takes the risk of not being able to find a daughter-in-law. Knowing that the prospective groom's family cannot afford a generous bride price and an elaborate wedding, many families will be unwilling to give their daughters in marriage. To be allied to such a family would reflect unfavorably upon their own social position. As we have mentioned earlier, a family will occasionally economize by holding the engagement and the wedding on the same day, but such marriages are not easily arranged and are certainly not common. In one instance in which such an arrangement occurred in Hsiachichou the bride was at least six months pregnant, so that her parents obviously had little to say about their choice of in-laws.

The preferred form of marriage is, then, the favored form of marriage. It gives the family who can afford such a marriage the satisfaction of having proceeded in the proper way, and it also has the advantage of enhancing their position in the eyes of the relatives and neighbors. In so far as the form of marriage itself is concerned the sīm-pûa marriage is clearly a second choice, but it does have the [556] compensation of being considerably less expensive. We should therefore expect wealthy families to choose the more prestigious preferred marriage for their sons, while poor families might be expected to choose the less ostentatious but cheaper sīm-pûa form of marriage. Unfortunately, we cannot test this hypothesis in the case of Hsiachichou. [128] We do not have the information to compare families of the pre-1930 period in terms of their relative incomes, and in the post-1930 period

*583 only a very few sīm-pûà adoptions took place. These do all happen to
*584 be among the poorer families of the village, but the numbers are so
559 small that there is no possibility of a reliable test of the relation-
558 ship. Until such time as data is collected in other communities which
128 are demonstrably richer or poorer than Hsiachichou forty years ago,
we will have to be content with the villagers own statements that the
relative cost of the two forms of marriage was one of the factors which
they took into account in making their decisions.

*583 One thing, however, is clear. Although it is likely that eco-
*584 nomic considerations played a large role in the choice between the two
• 556 forms of marriage, these are by no means the only considerations which
entered into the decision. The poor may have chosen the sīm-pûà
marriage more often than the wealthy, but there were nonetheless
many wealthy families which preferred this form of marriage. A family
which was wealthy enough to build the first brick house in Hsiachichou
adopted a sīm-pûà for one of their sons, and the three families with
the largest land holdings in Hsiachichou in the pre-war period adopted
sīm-pûà for three of their six sons. There would seem to be no ques-
tion that these families could have afforded the more prestigious pre-
ferred form of marriage, and yet in some cases all chose the less
prestigious sīm-pûà marriage. We also know of several cases of truly
wealthy families living in the market town who adopted sīm-pûà for one
or more of their sons. One of these families was the largest land-
owner in the area, and was obviously not deterred by the cost of the
preferred form of marriage. Since one would expect the very wealthy to

583 584 586 be concerned about social approval and propriety, these decisions clearly involved other considerations.

606 [583] One of these would seem to be the type of family created by the two different forms of marriage. Tension between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is characteristic of the preferred form of marriage from the very inception of the relationship. At the engagement when the mother-in-law attempts to push the engagement ring past her daughter-in-law's knuckle, the assumption of hostility between the two women is symbolically expressed, and this hostility tends to become more intense and more open as the relationship matures. During the early years of the marriage, when the mother-in-law is still an active woman, and before her daughter-in-law has secured her position in the family, the older woman will usually be the dominant member of the pair, a position which she seldom hesitates to exploit, taking advantage of every opportunity to harass and embarass her son's wife. A stranger in her husband's village as well as in his home, the untried and insecure bride has no choice but to swallow her resentment, but this early attitude of restraint does not last. The birth of her own children gives the young woman as much of a claim to a place in her husband's family as the mother-in-law herself, and in time the young woman also finds friends and confidantes among her husband's relatives and neighbors. Resentful of her mother-in-law's treatment of her, and often seeing the dissolution of the family as being to her advantage, the daughter-in-law then begins to respond to her mother-in-law's abuse in kind. The result is an active and

*583 informant pointed out that "this makes it better because she won't
*593 always be talking to her husband about his parents." The following
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183 statement by an elderly village woman is typical of statements by
606 other villagers.

> "It is always better for a boy to marry an adopted daughter than to marry a girl from another family. This is because you can get to know an adopted daughter's disposition better and can correct her without causing a lot of trouble. A girl from another family will always get mad when you try to correct her, and then she will say things to her husband and make trouble with his parents."

*583 The choice between the sīm-pûa marriage and the preferred marriage
*597 would thus seem to involve at least three major considerations.
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• 556 Weighing in favor of the preferred marriage is the fact that it is the
182 socially correct way of marrying and the most prestigious form of
183 marriage. It is the form of marriage which everyone in Hsiachichou would choose if form were the only consideration. Favoring the sīm-pûa form of marriage is the fact that it is the cheaper way of obtaining a wife for a son, and also the recognition that it creates a
[606] structure which is more compatible with the goals of the family. By adopting a girl and raising her as a wife for their son a family replaces a tense and dangerous relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law with the more satisfactory mother-daughter
[178] relationship. Generally speaking, wealthy families of the pre-1930 period chose the preferred marriage more often than the sīm-pûa marriage because they were more concerned with status and could afford the expense of such a marriage. Poorer families, on the other hand, more often chose the sīm-pûa form of marriage as a way to avoid the

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near ruinous expense of the preferred marriage. There was not, however, a perfect correlation between these decisions and the family's wealth. Many of the wealthiest families in the community apparently chose the sīm-pûa marriage because of its structural advantages, and many of the poorer families decided in favor of the preferred form of marriage as a means of enhancing their social standing. Given the structural advantages of the sīm-pûa form of marriage and the generally low economic status of most of Hsiachichou in the years before 1930, the fact that as many as half of the families living in the community did not adopt sīm-pûa for their sons testifies to the importance of prestige and tradition as determinants of behavior in the traditional society.

*577 records only 4 cases of male adoption in the years before 1930, and only *562 4 more in the years after 1930. For reasons which we have discussed earlier, it is always difficult for a family to arrange to adopt a kòe-páng-kiâ:. Most families value their male children so highly that they are not willing to part with one of them simply because of the plight of a relative. There is no great compensation, and the loss is considerable. In the years before 1930 no family living in Hsiachichou adopted a male child from an agnate of another kê, and we know of [432] only one case of such an adoption in the years since 1930. The family which wants to adopt a son must almost always buy the child from a stranger or a professional dealer, and this involves difficulties so serious as to discourage most families from undertaking an adoption.

*577 One of these difficulties is, of course, the very expense of buying • 556 a male child. Many families cannot manage to accumulate the necessary [435] six or seven thousand dollars, and those who can are usually unwilling to spend so much money on a gamble. If they could be certain that they were not going to bear male children of their own, a family would probably be willing to spend all they could possibly afford to obtain a son, but they cannot be certain and the price is very high. They therefore hesitate in the hope that they may eventually have children of their own. The importance of the consideration of the costs of buying a male child is apparent from the fact that it has only been the wealthiest families in the village which have adopted male children. Three of the 8 adoptions by families living in Hsiachichou were among those few families which own the majority of the village land and one other adoption was

made by a man who was for a long time a highly successful trader on the mainland of China. The only case of male adoptions by families which we know to have been poor were cases in which the family did not have to buy the child. These included the one case in which an agnate gave a boy in adoption to a village family, and one other in which a sim-pûa was allowed to marry out of her foster family on the condition that she give her first born child to her foster brother whom she was to have married.

Unlike Chinese in many other parts of the country, the people of Hsiachichou do not insist that an adopted son be of the same agnatic line as his foster parents. The attitude of people here is that "once you adopt a child he is your own no matter whom you adopt him from. It doesn't matter whether he is of the same blood or not." But while the people of Hsiachichou do not worry about the pedigree of a child bought from a stranger, they do worry very much about the child's loyalty to his foster parents. The child's parents may later attempt to persuade him to return to his natal family, or the child may himself discover the fact of his adoption and want to return to his parents. As an example of the dangers involved in buying a child our village informants often cited the current difficulties of a village woman by the name of Ong Chun-ieng. After having worked for a number of years as a prostitute in Taipei and Wanhua, Ong Chun-ieng adopted a male child whom she sent to live with her own foster mother in Hsiachichou. Later Ong Chun-ieng was arrested and imprisoned for using narcotics, and the boy became part of a gang "living in air raid shelters and making their living by stealing."

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Of the rest, those men who had families and still married matrilocally, almost all were sons of poor families with a number of male children. These were families who could not afford to pay a bride price for all of their sons, and who perhaps also saw some economic advantage in having one of them become an heir in another family. Of 13 such village men 11 had at least one older brother, and 7 had at least one younger brother. Our genealogies include only one case of an only son who made a matrilocal marriage, and this case is unusual in a number of respects. The son of a sīn-pùà who was allowed to marry out of her foster family in return for her first born child, the boy was adopted by his mother's foster brother and intended husband. For some reason this man never married, perhaps because he already had a son. At any rate, by the time the adopted son was old enough to marry, he was so poor that he was unable to afford a marriage for him. He had lost much of the family's money in an unfortunate business venture, and was unable to work because of a prolonged illness. He therefore arranged for his son to marry into a woman's family on the condition that the family take the responsibility for supporting him in his old age. Although we know of several cases in which men who married matrilocally brought their mothers to live with them, this is the only case in which a father went to live with his son when the boy married into his wife's family. The villagers themselves thought the arrangement extremely unusual, and they may have been right in suggesting that the father was mentally deranged. He himself told us that he had "died" several times only to be saved from the agents of the underworld by the god Tu Ti Kung.

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